

The state of Connecticut has fostered unaffordable living costs in Connecticut by approving obscene price increases demanded by energy monopolies Eversource and UI, causing suffering due to cold and heat, and loss of electricity resulting in homelessness. Nationally, fracking companies are exporting much more fracked methane to Europe, creating unaffordable price increases for American consumers (exactly as you were warned in 2015 by Senator Blumenthal). Export to Europe has increased methane prices and as a result, energy companies like Eversource are seeing unprecedented profits. Ukrainians shouldn't freeze to death because of war but poor Americans and people of color shouldn't freeze to death in an apparent time of peace. Rent prices have risen because during the pandemic, landlords were able to increase their prices, and then just kept doing so, causing inflation, homelessness and increased profits for the housing sector.

The very least the state can do to slow the increase in evictions and unaffordable housing and energy costs is to pass SB 4. So far, by empowering energy monopolies to prey on the least able to pay, the state is guilty of harming its own populace. It is long overdue that the state invest in the least efficient housing (which landlords have failed to update) because the people who live in said housing are suffering the most from the greed of the housing and energy sectors. A winter eviction moratorium and attempts to improve efficiencies in housing that landlords have maintained at substandard levels seems like the very least you can do.

Thanks to the state approving obscene price increases for electricity, despite no significant improvements made by Eversource or UI, people in the state are unable to pay for their heating costs. The situation is so dire that Operation Fuel has to temporarily shut down to deal with the spike in applications. This suggests that more than few Connecticut residents will not have heat, again thanks to the state making living here unaffordable for low income families.

As a former landlord, I find it shocking that a winter eviction moratorium must be mandated. Evicting a family with children in winter should be criminalized. Homelessness can lead to death. Since it is impossible to legislate humaneness, you must legislate to reduce harm to the most vulnerable. Passing SB 4 is a crucial step to make up for the state's past mistakes.

Sincerely,
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